

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PANAMA 06607 01 OF 02 282350Z

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ACTION SS-25

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O R 282315Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5598

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 PANAMA 6607

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, KS, PN

SUBJECT: KOREA IN 30TH UNGA: PANAMANIAN POSITION

REF: A) USUN 5353 B) STATE 254894 C) PANAMA 6576

D) PANAMA 6597

1. HAVE JUST COMPLETED LONG AND FRIENDLY TALK WITH GENERAL TORRIJOS. KEY SHIFT IN HIS POSITION REPORTED REF. D. I OPENED TALK WITH PLEASANTRIES ASKING ABOUT HIS JUST COMPLETED VISITS TO PERU AND BOLIVIA. HE WAS PLEASED WITH RECEPTION HE GOT IN BOTH COUNTRIES.

2. I THEN RAN DOWN LIST OF POSSIBLE U.S. ACTIONS THAT PANAMA HAS REQUESTED TO HELP HIM MANAGE THE INTERIM BETWEEN NOW AND ACCOMPLISHMENT OF A NEW TREATY. I UNDERLINED THAT SOME WOULD BE RELATIVELY EASY WHILE OTHERS WOULD BE DIFFICULT AND TAKE TIME. BUT MAIN POINT WAS THAT WE WANTED TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE ON ALL OF THEM. ALL ITEMS WERE UNDER URGENT STUDY. ON SOME MATTERS IT WAS CLEAR WE WOULD NEED CLOSEST COOPERATION OF PANAMANIAN AUTHORITIES, AND ALL WOULD CALL FOR INTIMATE COORDINATION. GENERAL EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR OUR ATTITUDE AND WAY WE WERE TRYING TO MOVE AHEAD. HE SAID THESE MATTERS WOULD HELP HIM GREATLY.

3. WITH THAT AS BACKDROP, I MOVED ON TO QUESTION OF

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PAGE 02 PANAMA 06607 01 OF 02 282350Z

KOREAN RESOLUTIONS IN UNITED NATIONS. I OUTLINED ESSEN-

TIAL ELEMENTS OF BOTH FRIENDLY AND UNFRIENDLY RESOLUTIONS WELL AS POSSIBILITY OF MANEUVER TO GIVE LATTER PRECEDENCE IN VOTING. I TOLD TORRIJOS MY GOVERNMENT VIEWED THIS MATTER AS MOST SERIOUS AND OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO US. KOREAN ARMISTICE AND PRESENCE OF U.S. FORCES ON PENINSULA HAD HELPED PRESERVE PEACE FOR 22 YEARS. WE BELIEVE THAT ONLY RATIONAL LONG-RANGE SOLUTION WITH ANY REALISTIC HOPE WAS FUTURE DIALOGUE AMONG PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED. I NOTED THAT UNFRIENDLY RESOLUTION SOUGHT TO EXCLUDE REPUBLIC OF KOREA FROM THAT DIALOGUE. NOTHING COULD BE MORE UNREALISTIC AND IT WAS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO U.S. I ADDED THAT THOSE WHO WANTED QUICK PULLOUT OF U.S. TROOPS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN PEACE BUT IN NORTH KOREAN VICTORY. THAT APPROACH WAS INTOLERABLE. MOREOVER, I SAID, IT WAS KIND OF IRRESPONSIBLE MANEUVER IN UN THAT THREATENED VERY LIFE OF THAT INSTITUTION.

4. TORRIJOS SAID HE WAS ON THE SPOT. HE SAID HE SHARED MY VIEW OF NORTH KOREANS RECALLING ASSASSINATION OF ROK PRESIDENT'S WIFE AND UNPLEASANT PERSONALITIES OF NORTH KOREAN DELEGATIONS HERE SOME MONTHS AGO. AT SAME TIME, HE SAID HE NEEDED SUPPORT OF THIRD WORLD FOR PANAMA'S POSITION ON CANAL. HE THOUGHT PERHAPS BEST WAY TO HANDLE DILEMMA WAS FOR PANAMANIAN DELEGATION TO SIMPLY BE ABSENT WHEN TIME CAME TO VOTE. AT LEAST, HE SAID, HE WOULD SEND AMBASSADOR BOYD BACK TO NEW YORK WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO GET TOGETHER PRIVATELY WITH AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN TO TRY TO WORK OUT SOME STRATEGY THAT WOULD KEEP HIM OFF THE HOOK BUT DO NO DAMAGE TO U.S.

5. I SAID I DID NOT THINK THAT AVOIDING A VOTE WOULD HELP US. THIS WAS A PROBLEM OF GREAT CONCERN TO US AND WE NEEDED THEN HELP OF OUR FRIENDS IN MEETING IT. I RECALLED THAT PANAMA HAD VOTED WITH US ON KOREA LAST YEAR AND IT HAD CAUSED NO PROBLEMS FOR HIM. MOREOVER HE WOULD HAVE GOOD ARGUMENTS IN EXPLAINING SUPPORT FOR A RESOLUTION THAT SOUGHT TO PRESERVE PEACE AND URGED CONCILIATION IN HANDLING THE KOREAN PROBLEM. ALGERIAN RESOLUTION, WHICH SOUGHT TO EXCLUDE SOUTH KOREA, WAS AS REALISTIC AS ONE THAT SOUGHT TO SOLVE PANAMA CANAL PROBLEM WITHOUT REFERENCE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 PANAMA 06607 01 OF 02 282350Z

TO PANAMA.

6. I TOLD TORRIJOS I UNDERSTOOD HIS FELT NEED TO GET AS BROAD INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S CAUSE AS POSSIBLE. BUT I SAID I THOUGH HE SHOULD BE REALISTIC. FIRST, IT WAS CLEAR THAT MOST OF SO-CALLED NON-ALIGNED WORLD WOULD SUPPORT PANAMA AGAINST U.S. REGARDLESS OF WHAT PANAMA DID OR SAID. HE HAD THOSE VOTES, I ASSURED HIM. AT THE SAME

TIME, THE HARD COLD FACT WAS THAT THE NON-ALIGNED WORLD
COULD NOT GIVE PANAMA A TREATY. THE UNITED NATIONS COULD
PASS RESOLUTIONS BUT IT COULD NOT GIVE PANAMA A TREATY.
IT WAS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THE U.S. CONGRESS THAT
COULD PROVIDE A NEW DEAL FOR PANAMA. IN PLANNING STRATEGY,
AS HE WELL KNEW, IT WAS NECESSARY TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TARGETS.

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 06607 02 OF 02 290002Z

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 PANAMA 6607

EXDIS

7. IT WAS AT THAT POINT THAT TORRIJOS BEGAN TO ALTER HIS
POSITION AND TO WONDER ALOUD HOW HE COULD ACT AS WE WISHED
WITHOUT ALIENATING OTHERS. I REMINDED HIM THAT HE WOULD
BE FAR FROM ALONE IN LATIN AMERICA IN TAKING THE ACTION
I WAS URGING. I NOTED THAT COSTA RICA (WITH WHOM HE HAS
CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS) WAS A COSPONSOR OF THE
RESOLUTION WE WANTED APPROVED. HE ASKED ME ABOUT THE
ALIGNMENT OF OTHER LATIN GOVERNMENTS. I TOLD HIM MY IM-
PRESSION WAS THAT A LARGE NUMBER WERE FAVORABLE TO OUR
POSITION BUT I DID NOT WANT TO MISLEAD HIM BY GUESSING.
I WOULD CHECK IT OUT AND GET BACK TO HIM LATER IN THE
DAY WITH OUT BEST ESTIMATE OF THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY.

8. HE THEN TOLD ME THAT HE PLANNED TO GO TO VENEZUELA
TOMORROW FOR A PRIVATE TALK WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ. HE
SAID THAT IF HE COULD COME BACK TELLING PEOPLE THAT THE
VENEZUELANS HAD ASKED HIM TO VOTE WITH THEM ON THE KOREAN
ISSUE, HE WOULD DO IT. HE SAID THERE WERE GREAT DIFFER-
ENCES IN THE ESTEEM IN WHICH HE HELD VARIOUS LATIN GOVERN-
MENTS. HE MENTIONED GUATEMALA AND NICARAGUA IN DISPARAGING

TERMS, FOR EXAMPLE. BUT HE SAID OTHERS, THOSE WITH QUOTE DIGNITY UNQUOTE, WERE IMPORTANT. HE CITED COSTA RICA, COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA. HE ALSO SAID IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF SOME CARIBBEAN GOVERNMENTS WERE ON OUR SIDE OF THE RESOLUTION. HE THEN ASKED WHEN VOTE WAS LIKELY SINCE HE HAD UNDERSTOOD FROM BOYD IT WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL NEXT WEEK. I SAID OUR PEOPLE WERE OF THE IMPRESSION IT WOULD
SECRET

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PAGE 02 PANAMA 06607 02 OF 02 290002Z

BE EARLIER, PERHAPS IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO. I WOULD CHECK.

9. WE BROKE UP MEETING AT THIS POINT WITH MY PROMISE TO GET BACK TO HIM ON QUESTIONS HE HAD ASKED. HE SAID HE WANTED TO SEE ME LATER THIS WEEK AFTER HE RETURNS FROM VENEZUELA AND BEFORE HE GOES TO GUATEMALA ON SATURDAY. HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT GUATEMALA MEETING OF CENTRAL AMERICAN LEADERS BECAUSE HE THINKS THEY WILL FORCE HIM INTO JOINING THEM IN RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR GUATEMALA'S CLAIM TO BELIZE. HE SAID FRANKLY THAT HE THINKS THAT COLONY SHOULD BE INDEPENDENT RATHER THAN BEING ABSORBED BY GUATEMALANS. HE WISHED ALOUD THERE WERE SOME WAY WE COULD HELP HIM WITH THIS PROBLEM. I NOTED WE WANTED TO STAY OUT OF THIS PROBLEM AS MUCH AS HE DID.

10. I HAVE SINCE GOTTEN A MESSAGE OFF TO TORRIJOS NOTING THAT COLOMBIA AS WELL AS COSTA RICA WERE CO-SPONSORS OF FRIENDLY RESOLUTION AND THAT WE HAD GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT VENEZUELA WOULD BE VOTING WITH US ON ALL THREE DECISIONS CONCERNING KOREA. I ALSO NOTED THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF LATIN NATIONS HAD DECLARED THEIR INTENTION TO BACK FRIENDLY RESOLUTION AND THAT SEVERAL CARIBBEAN STATES WERE INCLUDED (I MENTIONED BARBADOS, GRENADA AND THE BAHAMAS AS EXPAMPLES). I ALSO STRESSED THAT WE HAD CHECKED AGAIN AND IT LOOKED AS THOUGH THE VOTE MIGHT WELL COME LATE TOMORROW OR PERHAPS THURSDAY. IN VIEW OF THAT, I EXPRESSED HOPE HE WOULD NOT LONG DELAY IN INSTRUCTING HIS DELEGATION. IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE IF HE WAITED UNTIL AFTER HE HAD SEEN PEREZ IN CARACAS. I REPEATED THAT WE HAD VENEZUELAN ASSURANCES THEY WOULD GO ALONG WITH US.

11. I HAVE MY FINGERS CROSSED THAT OUR TALK AND LATER INFORMATION ON VOTING LINEUP MAY BE ENOUGH TO SWAY TORRIJOS EVEN WITHOUT HIS TALKING WITH PEREZ. NONETHELESS I THINK WE SHOULD GO THROUGH EXERCISE OF APPROACHING VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT TO ENCOURAGE PANAMANIAN LEADER TO GO ALONG WITH OUR TWO COUNTRIES ON THIS MATTER.
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